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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND  
JMC CARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBURGEOIS, DBENZE AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER  
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Syria/Europe, Federation of  
Arab Lawyers, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestinian Territories (1/24)

11. Summary: Syrian papers today reported President Asad's  
meeting with Francisco Javier Rojo Garcia, Chairman of the  
Spanish Senate, focusing on the necessity of reactivating the

European role in the Middle East Peace Process, the ongoing  
modernization and reform process in Syria, and the Syrian-  
European partnership. Papers also reported President Asad's  
meeting with Vasos Lesarides, Chairman of the Cypriot Democratic  
Socialist Party, which dealt with the Cypriot issue, the Middle  
East Peace Process, and the Syrian-European Partnership.  
Papers also reported that the Federation of Arab Lawyers has  
formed a judicial board to defend Syria, and has addressed a  
message to UN SecGen Annan confirming the Arab nation's rejection  
of any interference in Syria's internal affairs and  
politicization of the IIC probe into the Hariri assassination.

Government-owned Tishreen cited a statement by Kamal Chatila,  
President of the Lebanese People's Congress, who stressed that  
the 22nd Conference of the Federation of Arab Lawyers was a  
message to the US that Syria cannot be isolated. Chatila called  
on Americans to reconsider their calculations following their  
military, political and economic failure in the face of the Iraqi  
resistance. He pointed out that what is going on in Lebanon aims  
to harm Syrian-Lebanese relations to serve Israeli interests. He  
expressed doubt over the credibility of the IIC probe into the al-  
Hariri assassination.

End of summary.

12. Selected Headlines:

"President Asad receives Rojo Garcia, Speaker of the Spanish  
Senate, and Vassos Lyssarides, Chief of the Cypriot Democratic  
Socialist Party. Talks focused on bilateral cooperation, Syrian-  
European partnership, the reform process in Syria and the  
importance of reactivating the European role in the Middle East  
Peace Process" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 1/24)

"Foreign Minister Shara discusses recent developments and the  
situation in the Palestinian territories with Fraouk Qadoumi,  
Head of PLO Political Department" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th,  
1/24)

"Arab Lawyers form a judicial board to defend Syria, rejecting  
pressure on it and expressing keenness for its sovereignty and  
national dignity. Directing accusations against Syria aims at

dragging Lebanon into civil strife" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 1/24)

"Arab Lawyers address a message to UN SecGen Annan: The Arab nation rejects any interference in Syria's internal affairs and politicization of the IIC probe into the Hariri assassination" (Government-owned Tishreen, 1/24)

"US POTOMAC Energy Group is licensed to work in Syria" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 1/24)

"Euro-American rejection of a Palestinian government that includes Hamas. Hamas expresses readiness to take part in the election process" (Government-owned Tishreen, 1/24)

"A US soldier and two pilots killed in a series of explosions in Baghdad. The Allawi list criticizes the international investigation team for not identifying those who violated Iraqi election laws" (Government-owned Tishreen, 1/24)

### 13. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"When A President Greet's his People"  
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Abdul-Fattah al-Awad, Chief Editor of government-owned Al-Thawra, said (1/24): "President Asad's speech to the Federation of Arab Lawyers creates a culture of optimism in contrast to the culture of frustration that some parties are working to promote in the Arab world.... When an Arab citizen listens to the president, he listens to a person who expresses the citizen's ambitions and opens to him the gates of optimism. Al-Asad noted that the

Socialist Party, which dealt with the Cypriot issue, the Middle East Peace Process, and the Syrian-European Partnership. Papers also reported that the Federation of Arab Lawyers has formed a judicial board to defend Syria, and has addressed a message to UN SecGen Annan confirming the Arab nation's rejection of any interference in Syria's internal affairs and politicization of the IIC probe into the Hariri assassination.

criterion of power is national unity and that nations are able to protect their peoples.

"The president saluted the Syrian people in his speech because the Syrians have shown a high-level of political awareness and immediately realized that something was being plotted against their country. The president saluted his people out of his belief that they embody the meaning of dignity, rejection of traitors, and adherence to identity....

"Al-Asad's speech was wise and calm, though it discussed hot issues in a noisy climate. The messages were clear and direct...."

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"Conspiracy and A Pan-Arab Message"  
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Explaining the message of Al-Asad's speech, Muhammad Khair al-Jammali, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (1/24): "President Asad wanted to say that no Arab or Muslim -- peoples or governments -- is safe from the conspiracy which specifically seeks to undermine the Arab and Islamic identity of the region and cancel the cultural role of its people....

"The aim of this message was to invoke the spirit of struggle in the Arab nation and the Muslim world so that Arabs and Muslims would join forces against the threat to their stability, security, religion, hopes, and ambitions....

"Syria has sounded the alarm in the past and is sounding it today in the hope of achieving an Arab and Islamic awakening that will be up to the challenges of the war that is being waged against everything Arab and Islamic.

"Syria will remain the force of resistance against the American-

Israeli-Western plan, in defense of its national security, pan-Arab security, and Islam. But logic dictates saying that in order to foil this plan and its grave objectives -- considering the power of the parties involved in it -- there is a need for a comprehensive force that can only be achieved through a unified Arab-Islamic position based on the realization of the perils of the new colonialist plan and through mobilization of all Arab and Islamic capabilities to confront it...."

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"Syria's Strategic Vision and Pan-Arab Bases"  
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Dr. Khalaf al-Jarrad, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, commented (1/24): "The current developments in the Arab region, such as the occupation of Iraq and the Lebanese-Syrian tension, are parts of an anti-Arab plan that began with the partition of the Arab world through the Sykes-Picot agreement early in the past century. The plan targets the identity and culture of the Arab nation and seeks to smash the Arab will and control Arab resources...."

"The new colonialist forces are using the UN Security Council as a tool to harm the right of people to self-determination, under various pretexts, such as the war on terrorism, protection of world peace, and nuclear nonproliferation...."

"There are grave consequences from the attempts to make the concept of national sovereignty subject to the will of the United States and its allies...."

"Israel is the permanent danger and actual threat to the Arab and Islamic countries.... Those who believe that Israel, with its expansionist Zionist ideology and racist inclinations, can coexist peacefully with the countries of the region and be content with its current borders, are wrong...."

"Syria realizes and reads accurately the hostile plans and the international balance of power. But it also knows the elements of

Socialist Party, which dealt with the Cypriot issue, the Middle East Peace Process, and the Syrian-European Partnership. Papers also reported that the Federation of Arab Lawyers has formed a judicial board to defend Syria, and has addressed a message to UN SecGen Annan confirming the Arab nation's rejection of any interference in Syria's internal affairs and politicization of the IIC probe into the Hariri assassination.

power that Arabs possess, reads the experiences of other nations, and knows the meaning of adherence to independence, sovereignty, and principles...."

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"Dreams of Conspirators"  
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Omar Jaftali, a commentator in government-owned Tishreen, said (1/24): "The Lebanese nationalist forces and figures agree that it is impermissible to tamper with Lebanon's identity and national principles...."

"These forces and figures have repeatedly sounded the alarm, warning that Lebanon is targeted by the United States and Israel. On the other side, there are some individuals who have taken the side of Lebanon's enemies and have begun to level random accusations against every voice calling for unity and for keeping Lebanon within the Arab family.... These individuals raise the slogans of independence and sovereignty but turn a blind eye to the real interference in Lebanon's affairs by the US Embassy and American envoys."

"The majority of the Lebanese will foil the attempts to create sedition and will frustrate the dreams of those who are conspiring with the plan of trusteeship and subservience."

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